

## ROAD NETWORK PLANNING PROCESS

### INTRODUCTION

During upcoming months, staff will be working with all communities to develop a preferred road network for the GP2020 Circulation Element. For illustrative purposes, a sample was prepared to detail the process County staff, GP2020 consultants, and Community Planning or Sponsor Groups will use to develop the preferred network. This example demonstrates how traffic issues will be studied and alternative solutions developed for review by each community.

The preferred road network should respond to community-level issues that surface during the GP2020 planning process. Listed below are potential sources for obtaining data that would identify community issues concerning roadway and traffic:

- Traffic Model Forecasts: GP2020 staff worked with the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) to prepare traffic forecast models for Base Year 2000 and seven future land use scenarios. Initial information on roadway deficiencies is available from a preliminary Year 2020 forecast for the August 2003 Working Copy Map<sup>1</sup>. The modeling will be further refined once a land use map is selected, and will enable County staff to fine tune forecasts to a level of accuracy appropriate for road network planning purposes.
- Road Master Plans: Existing, community-level road master plans (such as the Ramona Road Master Plan) can provide background information on traffic issues and possible solutions.
- Town Center Planning Workshops: Town center planning is currently being conducted in Ramona, Valley Center, and Cameron Corners and was previously conducted in Fallbrook. These planning exercises can identify strategies for improving both vehicular and pedestrian circulation/safety within and to/from the town centers.
- Community Planning Group Requests: As part of the GP2020 planning process, community planning groups made specific requests concerning the road network. When feasible, these requests should be incorporated into the preferred road network.

### ROAD NETWORK ANALYSIS

#### Preliminary Objectives

Staff created a set of preliminary objectives for evaluating traffic scenarios and, ultimately, for preparing road network plan alternatives. The primary objective of a road network plan is to remove deficiencies within the network by upgrading roads to LOS D or better<sup>2</sup>. Preparing a road network that is balanced with the GP2020 land use plan is a required component of the CE Element. Additional traffic model forecasts will be used to test alternative road network plans for their effectiveness in eliminating road deficiencies<sup>3</sup>. Specific objectives would be used to

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<sup>1</sup> Future forecasts assume full build-out of the August 2003 Working Copy Map in the year 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Adding an additional lane to improve road conditions projected for LOS E or F may produce a level of service higher than LOS D, but improvements are primarily designed to achieve LOS D.

<sup>3</sup> In unusual cases, a decision could be made to accept a lower LOS rather than improve the road network.

evaluate traffic scenarios in each community. The objectives below were developed for this example of road network planning.

- Improve local traffic connections
- Improve regional traffic connections
- Minimize environmental impacts
- Minimize impacts to existing land use
- Minimize costs
- Respect community character
- Incorporate community preferences
- Support town center revitalization

During upcoming months, staff will work with community groups to identify objectives for road network planning purposes. All of these objectives, or any combination thereof, could be tailored for use with each specific community.

### **Preliminary Road Network Scenarios**

In order to evaluate the effects of different strategies, staff studied five road network improvement scenarios that implement planning objectives. These scenarios would be adapted to reflect the characteristics and specific issues of a particular community. The five scenarios used for this report are provided for illustrative purposes only. These scenarios focus only on road network changes. Land use changes are another method that could also be used to reduce congestion and produce a balanced general plan. The first three scenarios focus on addressing specific problems in the road network, while the remaining three address community-wide issues.

- a. Improve Existing Roads
- b. Construct/Improve Existing Circulation Element (CE) Road Network
- c. Main Street Area Improvements
- d. Enhance Local Connections
- e. Enhance Regional Connections
- f. Accept a Lower Level of Service

Although this example does not evaluate each scenario in detail, it does identify the major components, issues, and benefits/problems associated with each road network scenario. These scenarios are meant to serve as potential tools in the toolkit to improve road circulation.

### ***Scenario A: Improve Existing Road Network***

This scenario improves the existing road network by increasing the number of lanes for roads forecasted to operate at LOS E/F in the year 2020. Although road widening would improve

forecasted road deficiencies, unacceptable effects could result within the community. Widening main streets in town centers could impact local businesses and community character by removing parallel parking, landscaped medians, and street trees. Widening roads in residential areas will reduce setbacks, potentially resulting in additional noise from traffic and a decreased quality of life for area residents.

### ***Scenario B: Existing Circulation Element (CE) Network***

The existing CE network combines existing roads with rights-of-way for roads that are not yet constructed or improved to the road classification specified in the CE network. Build-out of the existing CE network would probably resolve many forecasted roadway deficiencies, and it reflects previous planning efforts. Nevertheless, community planning and sponsor groups need to be consulted to ensure that CE network roads reflect current community preferences. For example, the construction of two existing CE road alignments—SA 603 and SC 931 in northern Ramona—would bisect the northern portion of the Ramona Grasslands and is not supported by the community.

### ***Scenario C: Main Street Area Improvements***

This scenario would provide improvements to the street network for town centers and rural villages. The primary intent of these improvements is to disperse through traffic to alleviate congestion while minimizing impacts to adjacent land uses. Some examples are identified below.

- Currently, the discontinuous street pattern within the Ramona town center causes congestion on Main Street (SR-67) by forcing more local traffic onto Main Street than would be necessary if local streets were better connected. Completing the street grid would also improve pedestrian access and safety within the town center, especially if combined with traffic-calming improvements along Main Street.
- The connection of discontinuous roads, such as Ivy Street, within the Fallbrook town center would improve traffic flow and improve peak hour congestion. The continuation of Reche Road, a major east/west connection, from Stage Coach to Old Stage Road and the addition of a connector from Fallbrook Street to Reche Road would provide functional alternatives to Mission Road and SR76.

### ***Scenario D: Improve Local Connections***

Scenario D would connect discontinuous roads outside the town center, which would improve travel within the community. Improved local connectivity would also make it easier to get to the village or town center, supporting revitalization efforts. This scenario improves local road connections and could help reduce traffic congestion on certain local roads. Circulation improvements to local connector roads should be balanced with existing land uses. Increased traffic may not be appropriate in areas with certain residential and other land uses, and could produce adverse impacts.

***Scenario E: Improve Regional Connections***

Scenario E would provide new roads or improvements to existing roads that serve regional circulation requirements. A proposed southern bypass in Ramona is an example of a regional connection. This road would help relieve traffic congestion along SR-67 by rerouting truck and other through-traffic around the Ramona town center. Valley Center's population growth will also require regional traffic solutions. The Valley Center Planning Group has proposed a new east/west road that would connect Cole Grade Road at West Oak Glen Road (near the Valley Center High School) to Lilac Road. The proposed two-lane limited access road would improve connectivity between the two higher density areas in the central portion of Valley Center and would provide an important connection to I-15 through Rancho Lilac. This proposed northern route would provide an alternative to the congested southern connections of Old Castle Road and Circle R Drive.

***Scenario F: Accept a Lower Level of Service***

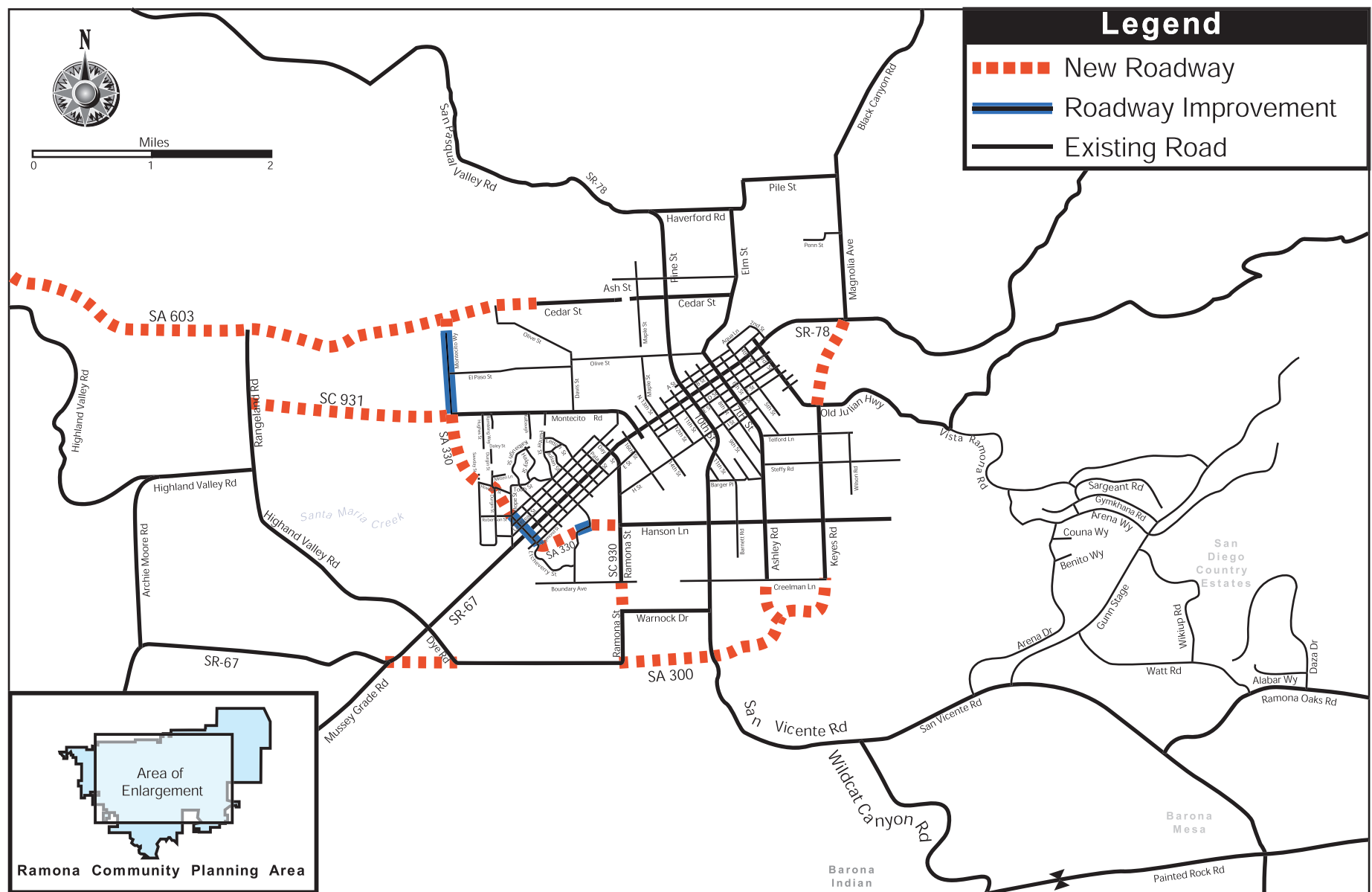
Some communities would prefer to accept a lower LOS than to widen roads or construct new roads. Roads that are located in a town center area with parallel or alternative routes and with existing buildings of significance to the community and/or significant environmental features, may be considered to have a LOS E threshold instead of a LOS D threshold. For example, the community of Alpine does not want to widen Alpine Boulevard to solve traffic congestion problems. To preserve its character, the community has elected to retain Alpine Boulevard as a three-lane road, even though this will result in a LOS D or worse. This will enable existing buildings and street trees to be preserved, along with other features of the streetscape essential to retaining community character. Accepting a lower level of service is not consistent with Transportation Policy 1.1 of the currently adopted General Plan Public Facilities Element. Implementation will necessitate revision to the Public Facilities Element to allow a lower LOS for some CE roads.

**ROAD NETWORK ALTERNATIVES**

For illustrative purposes only, several road network improvement options were prepared for the community of Ramona. Ramona was selected because its existing Road Master Plan provides more information on road conditions and community preferences than is available for other communities. Examples of Scenarios A through E, described earlier as a "toolkit" for preparing road network alternatives, are included as Figures C-1 through C-5 at the end of this section. Potential road improvements are based on road deficiencies forecasted in the August 2003 Working Copy Map, shown in Attachment D.

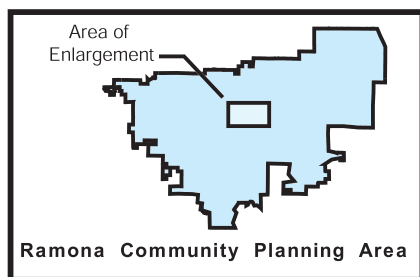
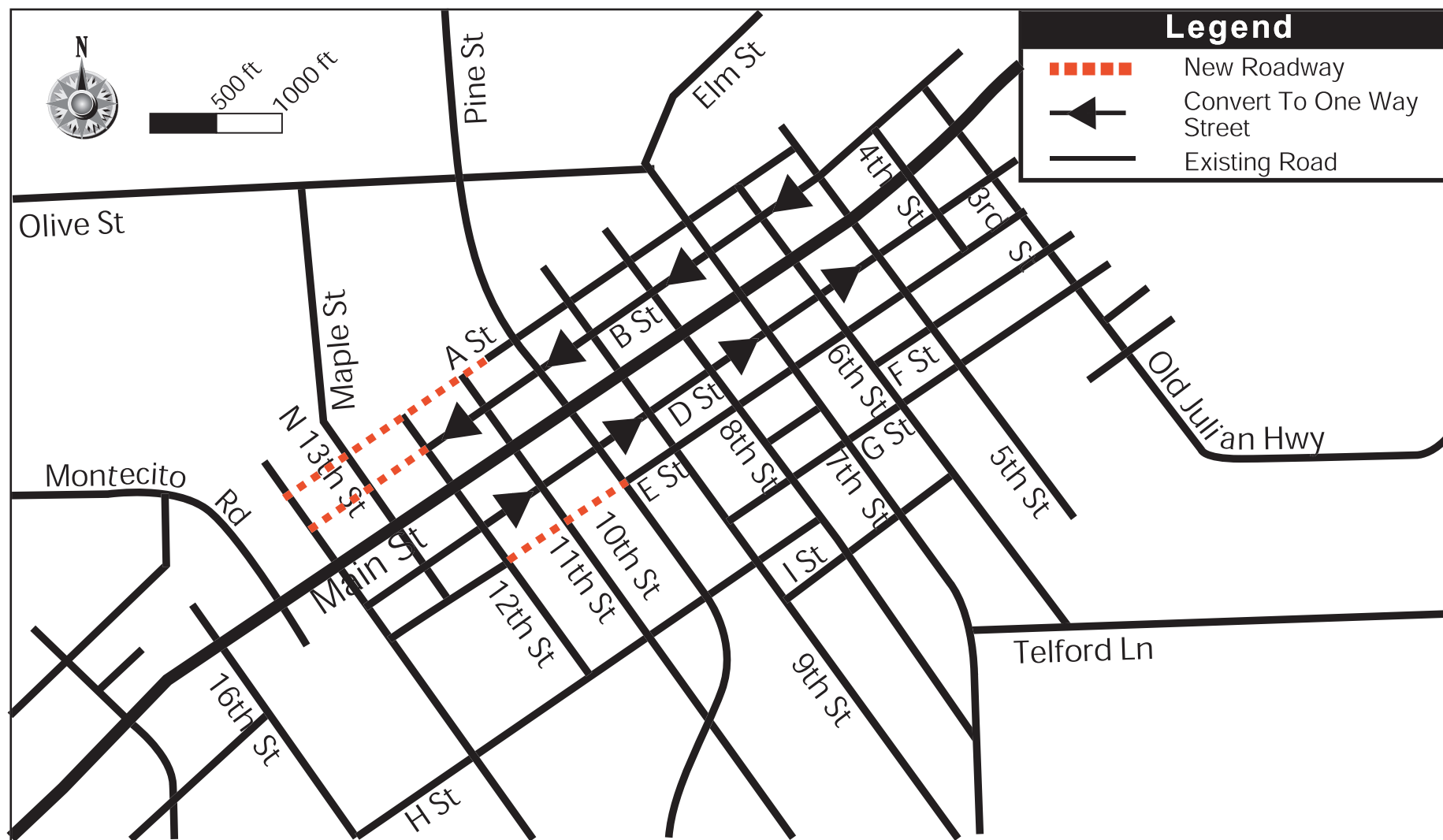
Developing road network alternatives is the next step in the planning process. Community preferences are a major factor to be considered when developing network alternatives. During the road network planning process, staff and consultants will work with community representatives to review road network improvements and to develop alternatives based on regional and community-wide objectives. Preferred Road Network alternatives for each community will be developed from the toolkit of road improvements discussed in the previous section. Traffic network options also need to be tested using traffic forecast models and reviewed for environmental impacts.



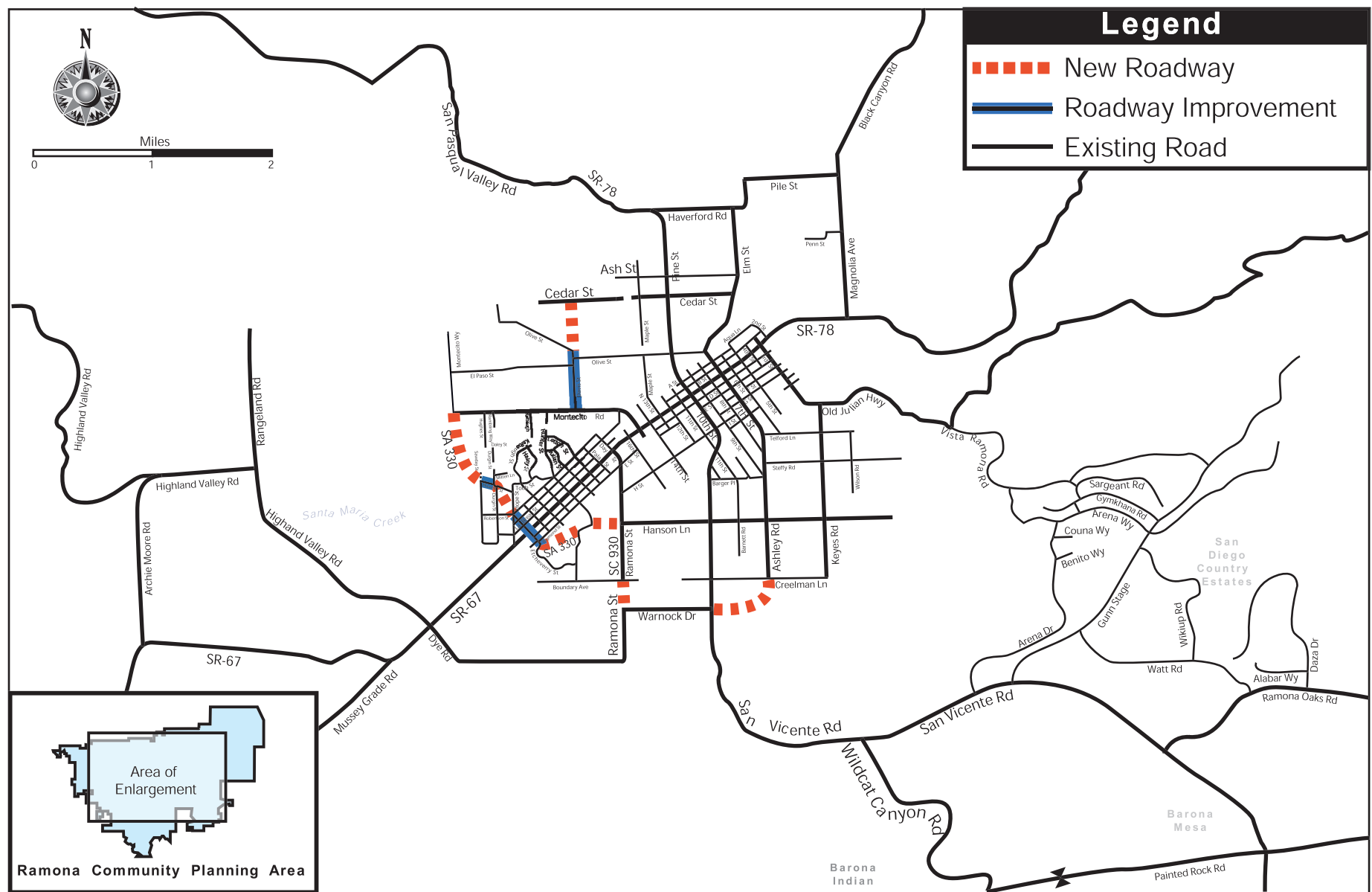


**Figure C-2**

**Scenario B: Existing Circulation Element Network**

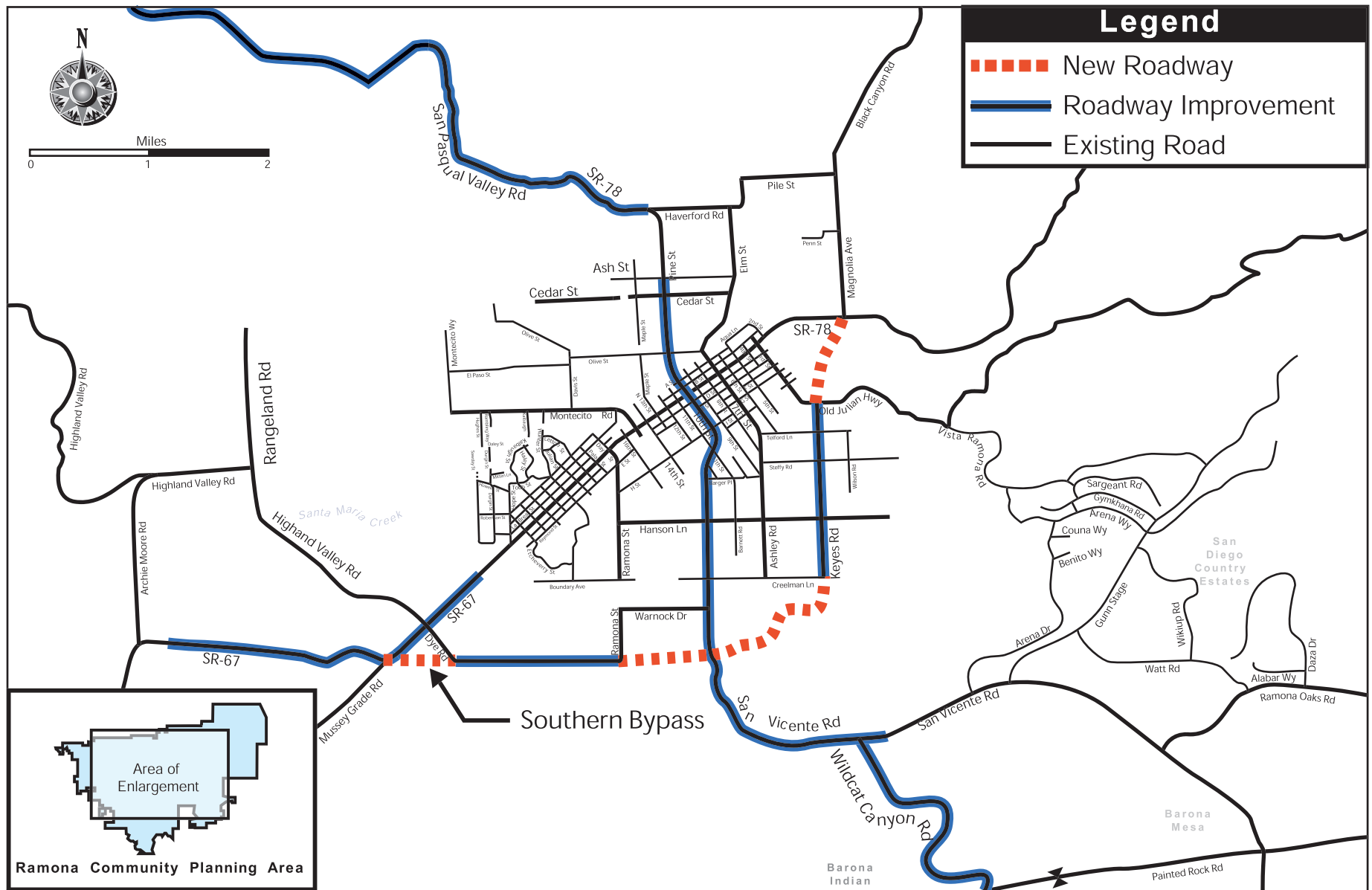


**Figure C-3**  
**Scenario C: Main Street Area Improvements**



**Figure C-4**  
**Scenario D: Improve Local Connections**





**Figure C-5**  
**Scenario E: Improve Regional Connections**